

NEW SOUTH WALES.

BUSINESS STATISTICS - WEEKLY NOTES.

21st May, 1940.

This Week's Notes include:-

PART I SEASON: Favourable.

EXPORT PRICES AND EXTERNAL TRADE CONDITIONS: Export prices steady but outlook for wheat not maintained. Economic effects of invasion of Holland and Belgium. Reduced rations in U.K. British oversea trade, April, 1940. Slump of oversea stock exchanges.

WOOL: Arrivals in Sydney to May 16, 1940. Aust. trade with countries occupied by Germany. South African sales to U.S.A. and Japan. British exports maintained.

WHEAT: Heavy fall in oversea markets. Improved crop prospects in Europe and North America. Progress of Australian disposals. Local market quiet, prices unchanged.

BUTTER: Production low. Reduction of British ration.

METALS: Rise in tin and silver prices in London.

PART II INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY RELATIONS. Sterling and franc weak on New York open market. U.S.A. "freezing order" affecting Dutch and Belgian credits. Dutch gold. Swedish bank rate.

PART III WHOLESALE TRADE, N.S.W. - Employment - March, 1940  
- Sales under Sales Tax Acts - March and March Qr., 1940.

OVERSEA TRADE, AUSTRALIA - April and July-April, 1939-40.

SAVING BANKS, N.S.W. - Deposits ) <sup>30th April</sup>  
Open Accounts ) At ~~31st~~ March, 1940.

PART IV BUILDING PERMITS, METROPOLIS.  
- Value and Dwellings Proposed - April and Jan.-Apr., 1940.

MOTOR VEHICLES, N.S.W. - New Motor Sales - April, 1940.  
- Registered Vehicles at 30th April, 1940.

GAS AND ELECTRICITY, SYDNEY - Index of Consumption - April, 1940.

BUSINESS STATISTICS - WEEKLY NOTES -  
21st May, 1940.

PART I. PRIMARY AND EXPORT INDUSTRIES.

SEASON. General but mostly light rain fell last week and over the weekend there were further falls along the central part of the coast. Excellent germination of wheat is reported. Pastoral conditions are generally favourable.

EXPORT PRICES AND EXTERNAL TRADE CONDITIONS. The level of Australian export prices is virtually stabilised by the British contracts. The slump in oversea markets for wheat if continued will affect the price and disposal prospects for the large quantity of wheat yet unsold. The index number (Commonwealth Bank) of Australian export prices in Australian currency is 81.4 per cent. of the 1927 average and 28.4 and 9.4 per cent. higher than one and two years ago.

German occupation of Holland and a large part of Belgium renders more vital than ever the British market to the Australian economy. Both countries were importers of wheat and Belgium was the principal market for Australian barley exports. British experts believe the invasions of recent months mean a tightening of the British blockade and shipping available to the Allies has been increased; but against this there are the new dangers to ocean transport now that Dutch ports are in Germany's hands.

It has been announced that Australia and Japan have mutually intimated their desire for preservation of the status quo in the Dutch East Indies. This has important economic as well as strategic significance to Australia.

On May 27 the British sugar ration is to be reduced to 8 oz. from 12 oz. weekly; the butter ration of 8 oz. weekly is to be halved from June 3, and an early reduction in the bacon ration is forecasted by the Ministry of Food.

British exports in April (£stg. 48.3m.) were highest for any month since 1930, and £stg. 13.2 m. more than in April, 1939. The value of imports increased from £stg. 70m. in April, 1939 to £stg. 110m. in April, 1940.

Between May 9 and 17 industrial share values fell about 16 per cent. in New York and 6 per cent. in London. There was very heavy selling in New York.

WOOL. Wool arrivals in Sydney from July 1, 1939 to May 16, 1940 were 1,248,969 bales. This was 213,326 bales more than in the corresponding period of 1938-39. Approximately 4,000 bales of fellmongered wool were appraised in Sydney last week. The stoppage of wool haulage owing to the coal strike may result in less wool being available for the clearing-up appraisements in June than was expected.

The undertaking of the British Government to purchase the entire Australian wool clip for the duration of the war and one season thereafter has an added significance as a result of Germany's conquests.

EXPORTS OF WOOL FROM AUSTRALIA. ANNUAL AVERAGE, 1935-39.

	<u>Belgium.</u>	<u>Netherlands.</u>	<u>Poland.</u>	<u>Czechoslovakia.</u>
Quantity (bales, 000)	388	46	44	33
Proportion of all wool exported (per cent.)	13.9	1.6	1.6	1.2

South Africa is deprived of some open-market buyers, but secured a significant increase in purchasing from the United States and Japan in 1939-40. South African disposals to these countries were:-

	<u>July-March.</u>	<u>1938-39.</u>	<u>1939-40.</u>
To United States (Million lb.)	.57	32.16	
To Japan "	1.82	12.86	/The...

PART I. (Continued.)

The South African Woolgrowers' Association will seek a renewal of the British wool-buying scheme in the coming season.

It is reported that British export trade in finished woollen goods is well maintained, but because of difficulty in obtaining wool and tops the home market demand for yarns and piece-goods cannot be met.

The agreed price for the 1939-40 clip (13.4375d. (Aust.) per lb.) compares with the market average of 9.9d. per lb. a year ago and is within 6 per cent. of the average for the three seasons ended 1937-38, which was the highest of the post-depression period.

AVERAGE PRICE OF GREASY WOOL IN SYDNEY.

	Seasons ended June.						May 18.
	1926-29.	1931-33.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1939.	1940.
Pence (Aust.) per lb.	17.2	8.5	16.4	12.7	10.3	9.9	13.4(a)

(a) Agreed price for British purchase of 1939-40 clip; subject to addition of one-half profit on re-sale of wool outside U.K.

WHEAT. Wheat futures have slumped heavily in oversea markets. Between May 11 and 18, July futures fell approx. 30 cents a bushel in Chicago and 20 cents a bushel in Winnipeg. This was due to war developments and the closing of further wheat importing markets to world trade. United States grain exchanges have, as asked by the Secretary for Agriculture, pegged grain futures at last Saturday's closing prices, which were lowest of this season.

May rains have improved the outlook for North American spring wheat and in Europe warm weather has benefited crops.

A London cable (19.5.40) refers to "The British appropriation of Canadian wheat" but as yet there is no further information regarding this.

The Australian Wheat Board disclosed that 5.35 million bushels of wheat were sold in the fortnight ended May 17, 1940. According to the statement 112.2 m.b. have been sold, 23.2 m.b. will be required for local consumption for the balance of the year and 60.125 m.b. remain for disposal abroad. "The shipping position had improved and special precautions had been taken against mice in wheat stacks." It is understood that payment for 28 m.b. of the British purchase will be made on July 15, 1940.

Some small contracts for export flour were made but generally the local market was dull last week. The Board's prices were unchanged; bagged wheat for export 4s.3d. per bushel, and silo wheat for local flour and small export orders, 4s.3d. per bushel, f.o.r., at ports. To bring local prices into line with oversea prices a substantial reduction will be necessary.

The price of flour (including tax) was steady at £12.10s. per ton.

/PRICES OF .....

PART I. (Continued.)

PRICES OF WHEAT IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

	<u>Bulk Wheat.</u>	<u>Ex trucks, Sydney.</u>	<u>Equiv. ex Farm, Country Siding (a)</u>
s.d. per bushel.			
Average - Seasons 1930-31 to 1934-35	2 9½	2 2½	
- Season 1936-37	5 3	4 8	
- " 1938-39	2 5	1 9½	
- April, 1939	2 5	1 9½	
" 1940	3 11(b)	(c)	
May 18, 1940	4 0(b)	(c)	

(a) Excluding bounty. (b) Price for sale for local consumption.

(c) The first advance gave farmers about 2s.1d. (net) a bushel. A further substantial payment may accrue if the unsold wheat is sold satisfactorily.

BUTTER. There is unlikely to be an increase from the present low level of butter production for three or four months but stock in most dairying districts should winter well.

The local wholesale price of butter is 158s.8d. per cwt. (unchanged).

Lord Woolton stated on May 15 that the British butter ration would be reduced from 8 oz. to 4 oz. weekly from June 3, 1940. According to recent reports actual consumption has been not much more than 4 oz. or 5 oz. a week. It is believed Australian butter, which has been sold at 1s.7d. (stg.) a lb. was landed in England at a cost to the Ministry of Food which permitted sale at 1s.4d. (stg.) a lb. The high price of butter and the availability of ample supplies of cheap margarine are the principal causes of the fall in British consumption of butter from about  $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. per head weekly before the war.

The agreed price for the British 1939-40 purchase of Australian butter (137s.2d. (Aust.) per cwt., f.o.b., Australian port) is 22s. (Aust.) above the export parity of the price on the London market of a year ago, and compares with export parities in earlier years as shown below:-

PRICES OF BUTTER - EXPORT AND LOCAL.

	<u>Average - Seasons ended June.-</u>	<u>At May 18.</u>
1929-32.	1933-36.	1937-39.
1939.		
Export Parity	135	88
Local Sales.	173	134
159		
159		
159		
137(a)		

(a) Agreed price for British purchase, 1939-40.

METALS. Tin prices in London rose sharply (£stg 6.10s. a ton) on May 13 and fluctuated in following days but at £stg. 269 12s.6d. a ton on Friday last, were higher than at any time since April, 1937 except only on Dec. 11 and 12, 1939 when open market selling was resumed. The accession of Holland as an ally is expected to make possible closer control of the market for tin.

The price of silver also advanced in London last week (2½d. stg. per oz.) and at 1s.11½d. per oz. on May 17 was above the average for any month since December, 1935.

## PART II. INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY RELATIONS.

Price of Gold (London)	Rate of Exchange.			
	London on New York.	London on Paris.	New York on London.	New York on Paris.
Per oz. fine.	\$ to £stg.	Fr. to £stg.	\$ to £stg.	\$ to Fr. 100
£. s. d.	(Pegged from Sept. 1939)			(Open Market).
Average-1937	7 0 9	4.94	124.6	4.94
" -1938	7 2 6	4.89	170.6	4.89
Av. July, 1939	7 8 6	4.68	176.7	4.68
" Aug. "	7 10 6	4.61	176.4	4.61
" Feb., 1940	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.96
" Mar., "	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.75
" Apr., "	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.53
April 27, 1940	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.51
May. 4, "	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.48
" 11, "	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.23
" 18, "	8 8 0	4.03	176.6	3.20

During the past week the open market quotation in New York for sterling fluctuated in the vicinity of \$3.20 to £stg. There were no selling quotations on May 13 and 17. The official rates of exchange, sterling for dollars and for French francs continued unchanged.

On May 13, the United States Treasury released Belgian and Dutch Government funds from a "freezing order" which then applied only to private credits of nationals of those countries. A further order of May 17 "re-froze" Dutch credits at the request of the Dutch Minister in the U.S.A.

It is reported that/part of Dutch gold holdings valued at £stg. 26 million was not effected before the German occupation.

Sweden has found it necessary to increase its bank rate from 3 per cent. to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

PART III. FINANCE AND TRADE.

WHOLESALE TRADE. Sales made at wholesale in New South Wales (as recorded under the Sales Tax Acts) increased in March by 7.5 per cent., in March quarter by 5.2 per cent. and in Sept.-Mar. (the war months) by 8.8 per cent. in comparison with the corresponding periods of 1938-39.

	<u>March.</u>	<u>March Qr.</u>	<u>Sept.-Mar.</u>
Value of Goods Sold : £ Million.			
1937-38	15.78	45.71	113.0
1938-39	15.78	45.56	112.6
1939-40	16.97	47.94	122.5

Higher prices and effects of increased export income and war expenditure upon purchasing power are indicated as factors in the increase as the value of retail sales has also increased. Direct sales of war materials by factories are probably a greater influence as the figures include non-taxable goods.

Employment in wholesale trade shows little change. In wholesale firms with ten or more employees the number of persons employed in March, 1940 (25,963) was 281 greater than in March, 1939. This was a smaller increase for the period than in any of the preceding three years:-

	<u>Year ended March.</u>			
	<u>1937</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1939</u>	<u>1940</u>
Increase in employment)				
with wholesalers with ) Persons	1,772	1,139	403	281
10 or more employees ) per cent.	7.9	4.7	1.6	1.1

Comparative statistics of wholesale trade are appended.

WHOLESALE TRADE - NEW SOUTH WALES.

	Sales by Registered Traders.			Employment with Wholesale Firms with Ten or more Employees.	
	Month of March.	Three Months ended March.	Increase over March Qr. of preceding year	February	March.
		£ million	£ million	Per cent.	Persons
1932	9.55	28.96	1.0	17,638	(June, 1933).
1937	15.43	43.81	18.1	24,318	24,140
1938	15.78	45.71	4.3	24,857	25,279
1939	15.78	45.56	(-) 0.3	25,555	25,682
1940	16.97	47.94	5.2	25,674	25,963

Minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

OVERSEA TRADE, AUSTRALIA. In April, 1940 merchandise exported (£stg. 11.12 million) and imported in to Australia (£stg. 12.2 m.) were 63.1 per cent. and 79.6 per cent. respectively in excess of values in April, 1939. A high level of exports has been maintained and the export season is being prolonged by difficulties in providing shipping.

Import totals by months since the war began compare with those of one and two years earlier as under:-

IMPORTS OF MERCHANDISE - AUSTRALIA. VALUE : £stg. MILLION.

	<u>Sept.</u>	<u>Oct.</u>	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Apr.</u>	Total 8 Months.
1937-38	9.5	9.3	10.8	9.4	9.2	9.1	9.7	10.0	77.0
1938-39	7.9	8.2	8.8	7.7	8.2	8.2	8.7	6.8	64.5
1939-40	6.8	7.3	7.4	7.7	11.5	13.9	9.6	12.2	76.4

/Oversea....

PART III. (Continued.)

Overseas prices and ocean transport costs have increased, and recent import totals were swollen by the arrival of war equipment. Import restrictions admit Categories A, B and C goods ordered before Dec. 1, 1939 for import up to June 30, 1940; hence the restrictive effect is yet to be realised.

As from May 1, 1940 export of over 100 specified commodities necessary for defence purposes became subject to license. The proclamation included metals, ores, minerals, chemicals, manufactures of iron and steel, etc. A license is required to export or import all jute goods, metal working machine tools, petroleum products, tetraethyl lead and solutions.

Extension of the war to the Netherlands and Belgium may decrease export opportunities in Europe, but increase them in the East Indies and adjacent markets, from which many enquiries for Australian goods have already emanated.

Comparative particulars of commodity trade (appended) show over the ten months ended April virtually equal export and import totals.

OVERSEAS TRADE - AUSTRALIA - MERCHANDISE ONLY.

	April.		Ten Months ended April.				
	1939	1940 <sup>P</sup>	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940 <sup>P</sup>
	Value in £stg. million.						
Merchandise -							
- Exports	6.82	11.12	86.13	99.79	95.47	82.84	94.73
- Imports	6.79	12.20	70.03	75.37	93.16	82.58	94.58
Commodity Balance	.03	-1.08	16.10	24.42	2.31	.26	.15

<sup>P</sup> Preliminary. Minus sign (-) denotes excess of imports.

SAVINGS BANKS. During April, 1940 the amount on deposit in savings banks in New South Wales increased by £297,000 to £87,056,000, and was £834,000 greater than in April, 1939. Taking March and April together to include Easter holiday withdrawals, the movements in recent years were:-

Increase (+) or Decrease (-) in Savings Deposits, March and April.

	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
£000	(-)	(+)	(+)	(-)	(-)
	277	123	513	369	111

Influences behind recent movements in savings deposits are the rising trend of incomes due to higher export prices, increased employment and war expenditure, with subscriptions to the war loan and the purchase of war savings certificates as contrary factors. The Commonwealth Treasurer disclosed on May 16 that savings certificates to the value of £227,511 had been sold in New South Wales.

The number of open savings accounts is increasing gradually, and in April, 1940 was nearly 20 per cent. greater than in April, 1935.

/SAVINGS BANKS.....

PART III. (Continued).

SAVINGS BANKS IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

	Depositors' Balances.		Increase in Deposits.		Number of Open Savings Accounts.	
	At 31st March.	At 30th April.	In April	In Year ended Apr.	At 31st March.	At 30th April.
	£000	£000	£000	£000	000	000
1932	70,767	69,678	(-)1,089	(-)352	(Mar. 1933	- 1,028)
1937	79,770	79,961	191	1,047	1,200	1,201
1938	83,989	84,211	222	4,250	1,266	1,272
1939	86,269	86,222	(-) 47	2,011	1,315	1,318
1940	86,759	87,056	297	834	1,319	1,320

Minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

PART IV.

PART IV. INDUSTRIES.

BUILDING PERMITS - METROPOLIS.

NOTE: These statistics do not include Government Buildings.

Permits have increased each month of this year. The April total (£1,041,000) exceeded that of April, 1939 by £109,000. But the future trend is uncertain. Totals for Jan.-Apr. were lowest in the city (£287,000) since 1934 and decreased appreciably in the suburbs also.

House proposals increased strikingly in April, but for other types of building values for April and Jan.-April declined compared with 1939.

Dwellings proposed in April numbered 666 in 1939 and 909 in 1940. In Jan.-Apr. there was a decrease from 2973 dwellings in 1939 to 2684 this year.

During the war months building permits granted in Sydney and suburbs decreased up to December, but have increased in each month of this year. In April the value (£1,041,000) was £109,000 greater than in April, 1939 (partly due to the changing date of Easter) though £215,000 less than in April, 1938.

In the six months ended April, 1940 permits decreased in value by 21.3 and 28.3 per cent. in comparison with the corresponding periods of one and two years earlier, respectively. How far the progressive increase of the past few months is significant of the future trend is conjectural. Monthly comparisons are:-

	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>	<u>Jan.</u>	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Apr.</u>	<u>Total six months</u>
Value of proposed buildings (£000)							
1937-38	1129	1153	905	899	1303	1256	6645
1938-39	1325	937	864	999	993	932	6050
1939-40	797	602	699	755	870	1041	4764

In April, as in every month since July last, permits in the city were below values of a year earlier, but the total for the suburbs was highest of any month of the war period and 21.9 per cent. greater than in April, 1939. This year however, suburban permits in Jan.-Apr. were £154,000 lower in value than last year, while the city total was lowest for the period since 1934.

BUILDING PERMITS GRANTED IN SYDNEY AND SUBURBS.  
(Including Alterations and Additions. Excludes Govt. Buildings).

	Month of April.			Four months ended April.		
	City.	Suburbs.	Total.	City.	Suburbs.	Total.
				£000	£000	£000
1937	195	796	991	394	2548	2942
1938	329	927	1256	996	3367	4363
1939	128	804	932	555	3232	3787
1940	62	979	1041	287	3078	3365

There was a noteworthy increase in the value of house proposals in April, 1940. Values for each brick and wooden and fibro houses were much greater than in April, 1939, far surpassing those of any other war month. These increases raised the total for houses for the first four months of the year to a level about midway between that of 1938 and of 1939.

PART IV. (Continued.)

BUILDING PERMITS TO ERECT, ALTER OR ADD TO HOUSES - METROPOLIS.

	Brick Houses.						Wooden and Fibro Houses.					
	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
Value in Thousands of Pounds.												
1938-39	402	327	332	368	387	272	89	47	63	81	79	60
1939-40	344	255	305	396	360	402	70	38	37	48	62	171

In April, 1940 inclusion of £100,000 for extensions to an hospital caused an increase in the class offices, theatres, etc. but otherwise all principal types of non-residential buildings were lower in value than in April, 1939. The amounts for the four months for flats, shops, factory buildings and offices, theatres, churches, etc. were below those of Jan.-Apr. 1939 as indicated at foot of the appended table:-

PRIVATE BUILDING PERMITS GRANTED - SYDNEY AND SUBURBS.  
Includes Alterations and Additions. Excludes Government Buildings.

Period	Houses								Total.
	Brick	Wood &c.	Flats. (a)	Hotels.	Shops. (b)	Factories (c)	Offices, Theatres &c.		
April -	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
1939	272	60	222	52	37	174	115	932	
1940	402	171	169	33	28	70	168(d)	1041	
Jan.-Apr.-									
1939	1359	284	791	212	170	533	438	3787	
1940	1463	318	563	218	128	288	387	3365	
Movement(e)	+ 7.7%	+ 12.0%	- 28.8%	+ 2.8%	- 24.7%	- 46.0%	- 11.6%	- 11.1%	

Includes (a) conversions to flats (b) shops with dwellings (c) public garages. (d) Including £100,000 for extension of an hospital. (e) Jan.-Apr. 1939 to 1940.

Building prospects generally are affected by reactions to the war, rising incomes and higher costs of building; as regards factory buildings, by the expansion of war industries and of other manufacturing to replace imports, and generally, by credit conditions and financial policy in relation to the war. Co-operative building societies are a diminishing influence which will be restored only if war exigencies permit of finance being found for prospective new societies. Advances are being approved under the Government's scheme to assist persons in the lower wages category to acquire new homes, but initially these will extend to only 400 borrowers.

DWELLINGS. The number of new dwelling units proposed in buildings for which permits were granted in April, 1940 was 909. This was greater than in any month since August, 1939, 243 more than in April, 1939, but 94 less than in April, 1938. There were 293 more individual houses and 30 fewer flat dwellings (new and converted) than in April 1939. To some extent comparisons were affected by the changing date of Easter.

Particulars of dwellings included in permits in Jan.-Apr. of each of the last five years are appended. These disclose a sustained high level of house building and a marked decrease (48.6 per cent. compared with two years ago) in the provision of flat dwellings.

PART IV. (Continued.)

PERMITS TO ERECT BUILDINGS CONTAINING DWELLINGS - METROPOLITAN AREA.

Type of Dwelling.	Four Months ended April.				
	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.
	Number of Dwellings.				
Houses - Of Brick	1039	1004	1475	1298	1344
- Of Wood, Fibro, etc.	273	317	458	518	542
<u>Total - Houses</u>	1312	1321	1933	1816	1886
Flats - In New Flat Buildings	1111	856	1521	1105	761
- In Converted Buildings	116	138	136	82	91
- With Shops, and Hotels	61	42	55	61	44
<u>Total - Flats, etc.</u>	1288	1036	1712	1248	896
Total Dwellings Proposed	2600	2357	3645	3064	2782
Less Demolitions & Conversions	93	175	100	91	98
Net Additional Dwellings	2507	2182	3545	2973	2684

The number of dwellings proposed in the first four months of this year represents an annual rate of 8,052. This is below the total of any year since 1936 and 32 per cent, below that of 1938. Trends in the provision of housing since 1929 were as shown below:

NUMBER OF DWELLINGS PROPOSED - SYDNEY AND SUBURBS.

	Calendar Year.					Jan.-April	
	1929.	Average 1930-34.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1939.	1940.
Individual Houses	7,095	1,205	4,852	6,342	5,847	1,816	1,886
Flats, with shops, etc.	3,097	656	3,900	5,821	4,290	1,248	896
Net Total $\phi$	9,854	1,839	8,490	11,853	9,822	2,973	2,684

$\phi$  After deducting demolitions and conversions.

MOTOR VEHICLES. The decline in new motor vehicle sales, which began in 1938-39 and was hastened by the war has continued. In April, 1940 sales of new cars were 49 per cent. and of lorries and vans 37 per cent. less numerically than in April, 1938. Comparisons illustrating the recent trend are:-

AVERAGE NUMBER OF NEW MOTOR VEHICLES REGISTERED - PER WEEK (N.S.W.)  $\phi$

	Cars, Cabs and Omnibuses.						Lorries and Vans.					
	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
1936-37	344	402	408	456	526	452	193	183	137	159	138	162
1937-38	483	534	427	470	505	478	246	222	163	184	177	182
1938-39	428	457	325	505	435	393	202	163	117	127	131	130
1939-40	368	344	246	333	268	243	169	127	87	110	106	114

$\phi$  Exclusive of most military and air force vehicles.

Since August, 1939 the number of registered motor vehicles of all kinds has decreased by 5,751 with decreases of 3,043 for cars and 1,277 for lorries and vans. The decreases in April were 1,285, 1,013 and 27, respectively.

/Increased.....

PART IV. (Continued.)

Increased motor taxation, certification of road-worthiness before re-registration, higher prices of petrol (now 2s.5d. gal. compared with 1s.10d. gal. before the war and 1s.8d. gal. on Jan. 1, 1939) oils, tyres, etc. and enlistments are factors behind the decrease in new motor sales and in registrations. It is stated that petrol consumption has decreased from 25 to 30 per cent. since the war began.

The numbers of motor vehicles registered at various dates were:-

NUMBER OF REGISTERED MOTOR VEHICLES IN NEW SOUTH WALES.

	1933	1938	1939.			1940.		
	July.	Apr.	Apr.	Aug.	Dec.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.
	Thousands.							
Cars	148.2	203.2	214.7	216.6	216.6	215.1	214.6	213.6
Lorries and Vans	42.2	72.0	76.4	77.7	77.5	76.7	76.4	76.4
All Vehicles	216.5	308.3	325.9	329.2	328.6	325.6	324.8	323.5

GAS AND ELECTRICITY. The amount of gas and electricity consumed in Sydney and suburbs in the first four months of this year was about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. greater than in Jan.-Apr., 1939. The index number for April was 37 per cent. above the average in April 1929 to 1931 and 9.3 per cent. higher than in April, 1939. (The latter increase was due in some part to the changing incidence of Easter.)

Rapid expansion of war industries is responsible mainly for the recent increase in consumption. Factors in the persistently rising trend of the past seven years are general industrial expansion (in March, 1940 employment in factories was 33 per cent. greater than in 1928-29), the greater use of power machinery and equipment commercially and in homes and increasing population.

INDEX OF CONSUMPTION OF GAS AND ELECTRICITY - SYDNEY AND SUBURBS.

	1929.	1932.	1936.	1937.	1938.	1939.	1940.
Index Numbers: Average, 1929-31 = 100.							
Month of April	104	96	110	119	119	125	137
Calendar Year.	105	96	112	119	123	131	-